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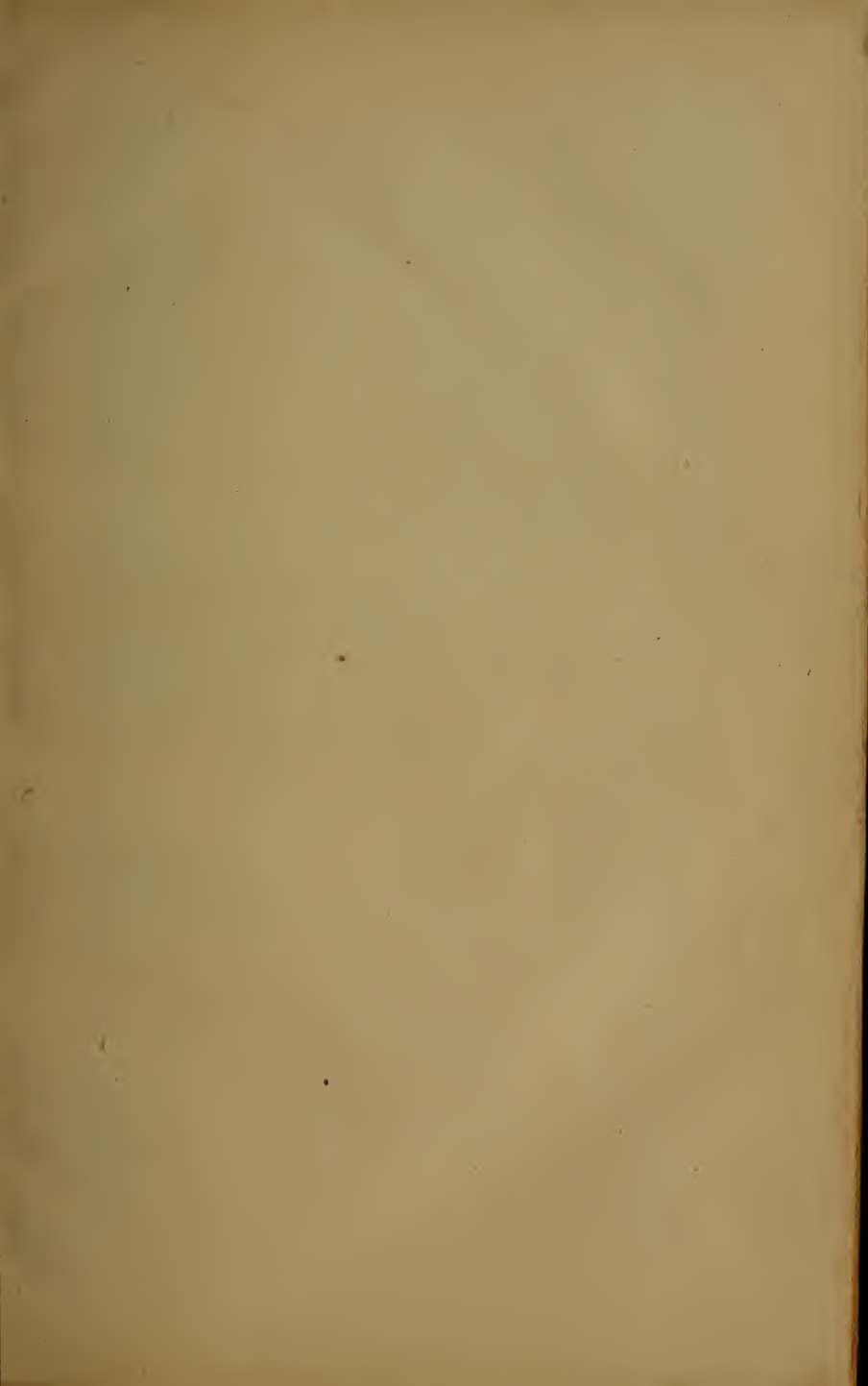
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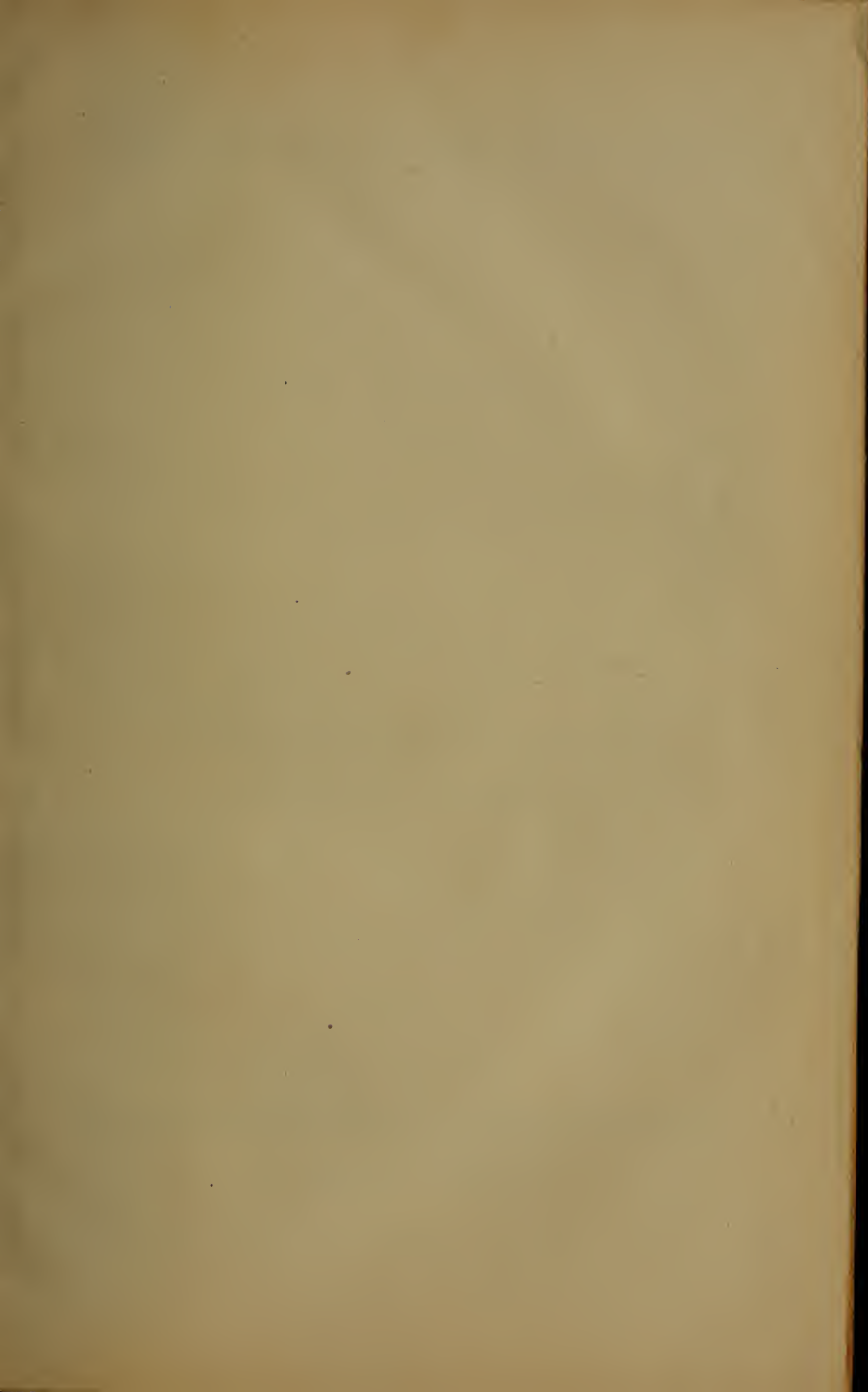
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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.







EXAMPLE AND EFFORT.

AN ADDRESS,

*Delivered before the Congressional Temperance Society, at
Washington, D. C.,*

BY

HON. SCHUYLER COLFAX,

VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

NEW YORK :

National Temperance Society and Publication House,
No. 58 READE STREET.

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1872.

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EXAMPLE AND EFFORT.

I COME before you, this beautiful afternoon, not to speak to you about political parties, nor about the details and conflicts of legislation. I come to speak to you, if possible, heart to heart and soul to soul. Not to denounce, but to persuade ; not to demand, but to plead. I come to speak to you, this afternoon, for liberty—that liberty which makes us free ; that liberty which elevates body and soul above the thralldom of the intoxicating cup.

But few years have passed since this land rocked to its centre on the question whether human slavery should continue on its soil. That was but the slavery of the body. It was but for this life. But the slavery against which I speak, this afternoon, is the slavery not only of soul and body, and brain, and heart, for this life, but it is a slavery which goes beyond the gates of the tomb to an infinite eternity. I scarcely know, when I rise to speak on this subject, where to commence an appeal to my fellow-men. It seems to me the ravages of this monster, this foe of humanity, this enemy of mankind, are so apparent that even the most eloquent would fail to add anything to what your own eyes witness, month by month of your

lives. Answer this question to your own hearts. Is there one man or one woman here this afternoon that cannot think now of some loved relative or some valued friend who has been dragged down from prosperity and happiness and usefulness to a slavery which embrutes and degrades its victim before it buries him in the death of the tomb? Not one; I think not one but can remember some honored or dear friend who has been stricken down by this evil, that to-day in this land, more than all else, makes misery, anguish, unhappy homes, pauperism, crime, murder, self-destruction. It is indeed a terrible tyrant, the insatiate monster of intemperance. In the thousands of years that have elapsed since this sacred Word came from inspiration, every year has been realized the truthfulness of that series of striking and startling questions—realized to-day in Washington as elsewhere: “Who hath woe? Who hath sorrow? Who hath strife? Who hath babbling? Who hath wounds without cause? Who hath redness of eyes. They that tarry long at the wine. They that go to seek mixed wine.” We speak of the horrors of war, and there are horrors in war. Carnage, and bloodshed, and mutilation, and empty sleeves, and broken frames, and widows’ weeds, and children’s woes, and enormous debt, and grinding taxation, all come from war, though even war may be a necessity to save a nation’s life. But they fail in all their horrors compared with those that flow from intemperance. We shudder as we read of the ravages of the pesti-

lence that walked abroad at noonday, but the pestilence, like war, kills only the body and leaves the soul unharmed. Our blood runs cold as we hear from Persia and elsewhere of famine, starving to death its thousands of victims. But all sink into insignificance when compared with the sorrow, and anguish, and woe, that follow in the train of this conqueror of fallen humanity. I scarcely dare cite to you the appalling figures of the terrible aggregation of these miseries.

Have you heard of those terrible statistics the census reveals, that there are four hundred thousand more people to-day engaged in the manufacturing and sale of liquors than in preaching God's Word and in teaching the rising generation in our schools or colleges? Have you thought of that saddening and gloomy fact that every year sixty thousand of our people march voluntarily, self-destroyed, down through a drunkard's life to the drunkard's death and grave? Where can we turn to see anything that relieves this sad and dark picture? Go to the poor-houses of New York. Seventy-two thousand wrecks of humanity are supported by the taxation of the people in the poor-houses of New York. And of those seventy-two thousand it has been ascertained that more than one-half came to their present ruin directly through liquor. But turn from New York to the broad and continental domain of our Republic. If there are seventy-two thousand in New York, there are seven hundred thousand in the poor-houses of the States and Territories of the nation.

And if half of these in New York have been dragged down from happiness and a competence to pauperism and wretchedness by liquor, there are nearly three hundred thousand families in this country shipwrecked for ever by slavery to this monster evil. When the habit was first formed, they could have snapped it with infant hands, but now it stiffens on older limbs like gyves of iron.

Imagine if you can that you could change, by some magical or auspicious power, this condition of affairs. Imagine that you could return these three hundred and fifty thousand families to productive industry in this land; that you could return to the people all the vast amount that is now squandered in intemperance; give back these fathers to their families; that those engaged in the manufacture and sale of liquor might become actual producers, adding to the development of our resources and the avails of our industry; and that the seven hundred million dollars, paid for that which puts an enemy into your mouth to steal away your brains, that which in three years would pay your national debt, could be diverted into channels of usefulness and enterprise. What a change this would make! what a paradise almost it would render our Republic!

I see before me, to-day, as I look on this audience, many persons distinguished in Washington in political life, in social life, in business life. But some of them, I fear, are to-day voluntarily enrolled in the great army of moderate drinkers.

When we appeal to them to give the force of their personal example and the force of their personal influence to the suppression of this evil, their answer is that they have strength to resist; they can quit when they please. Possibly they may, but before you all I can frankly acknowledge to you, from what I have seen in public and in private life, I dare not touch or taste or handle the intoxicating bowl! You say you are strong. I can point you to those who are stronger tenfold over than you, who began as you have, and who lost their power of resistance, before they knew they were in the thralldom of the tempter, and went down before the people of this country to a drunkard's death, and sleep to-day in a drunkard's grave. You say you are strong in intellect. I can point you to men tenfold stronger in intellect and judgment, who laughed to scorn the appeals of their fellow-men, and ended at last in going over that terrible abyss into the drunkard's tomb. I dislike to present to you personal illustrations. Yet some of them rise to my mind as I speak. I will give no name nor States. I remember a gentleman with a charming and loving wife, distinguished as a speaker. I have listened to him with interest and enthusiasm, as his eloquence thrilled my heart. I have sat with him in the councils of the nation. One time, I remember, when the scales hung in Congress doubtfully, when a single vote was to decide a most important question—I remember his coming to his seat so intoxicated, so lost to all conceptions of what

were the convictions of his judgment, and for which I suppose he would almost have given his life to secure their triumph, he was only kept in his seat to vote by having a friend stationed at every door from which he could obtain exit to seek more of the liquor which had already maddened his brain. I remember another, one of the most brilliant conversationalists to whom I ever have listened—a man who adorned his conversation and his speeches with the most beautiful and classic illustrations, showing a culture far above what I possess or could ever hope to. I saw him going each year downward, constantly claiming that he “could stop where he pleased ; but, at last, embruted, degraded, and dishonored, reckless and friendless, careless whether he lived or not, he died the death of the inebriate, unsorrowed and unmourned. I remember another, a warm and generous, genial heart, whose impulses were ever toward the right. He swayed the hearts of the people before him, and stirred them with his own enthusiasm, having a magnetic sympathy with his hearers as much as any man I had ever met or heard on the stump. But I saw him in this very capital, in spite of promises that never would he again touch intoxicating spirits, seduced by fashion and usage and temptation, till at last he cared no more for the duties devolved on him than the worst vagrant you can find on your streets when under the influence of liquor, but when out from under its effect would, with tears in his eyes, pray God and man to resist tempta-

tion. My friends, from the most learned professions, from the bench and the bar, from even the sacred desk, this demon, like death, has seemed to love to choose a shining mark. Not the narrow soul and heart, not the one who clutches the pennies in his grasp, are the most in danger ; but the genial, large-hearted men, who are not fortified as we are fortified by the determination not to yield to the first temptation. None of them are safe. From every profession he has drawn his victims. There is but one class whence he has never drawn any. The coronet on the brow of the noble of the earth, the grandest statesmanship, the highest culture, the most brilliant eloquence, have not saved men. There is but one class that has defied him, and will to the end. It is we who stand, God helping us, with our feet on the rock of safety, against which the waves of temptation may dash, but they shall dash in vain. I implore you to come and stand with us. I plead with you, for I believe that all mankind are my brethren. I believe in the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. And if I see an inebriate reeling along the street, I feel that, though debased and fallen, he is my brother still, created in the image of God, destined to an eternal hereafter. And it should be your duty and mine to take him by the hand, and seek to place his feet on the same rock of safety with ours. Work like this is what gave the triumph to the Washingtonian cause, when it swept so magnificently over the land in its wonderful mission. They recog-

nized the duty that I am trying to roll upon you—individual responsibility. They recognized that the inebriate was their brother-man, and that they owed a duty to him. How many of you have gone to your fellow-men when you have seen them on the shore of destruction, and tried to save them? Not one! Not one! How dare you, on your knees, ask God to bless you and yours, when you have not thus proved that you love your neighbor as yourself? This is what we need in the land—a revival in this direction; that those who preach in your pulpits, that those who speak on your platform, that those who write for the press, should impress more vividly on your souls what your duty is. More than all things else, we need a temperance revival. Whom would it harm? Any one? No, no.

What is needed is a temperance revival based on the principle of individual responsibility. Not asking for law, and then sitting down to see it execute itself. No! It is by laboring individually and collectively, week after week, and month after month, with those already in the thralldom of the tempter, and pleading with the rising generation to join this army and take its pledge. It is the pledge which should be written on our banners. Sympathy for the fallen should be its inspiration. The lifting up of our fellow-man should be our only reward. And we should find an abundant joy in labor which brought forth such noble fruit.

See how blessed and triumphant has been just such a work in Connecticut; and what has beer

done there can be done in every State and every locality where there are faithful workers and willing hearts.

I cut the following from the *Boston Journal* yesterday, and I trust it will rejoice you all as it did me :

WILLIMANTIC, CONN., March 9.

A little more than a year ago, Rev. Horace Winslow, pastor of the Congregational church in this place, organized a temperance movement, under the form of "The Good Samaritans," which is similar in its workings to the old "Washingtonians," by means of moral suasion. A friend furnished, lighted, and warmed a hall gratuitously, till there was interest enough wakened to secure means to pay the rent. Meetings an hour long have been held every Sabbath evening, 5.30 o'clock, ever since. At the first meeting there were present 30 persons, only one of whom was a female. At the second there were about 60 present. Now, every meeting the Franklin Hall is packed to the utmost. A few Sabbath evenings since there must have been over 700 present, a good portion of whom were females.

The exercises at these meetings, which are opened with prayer, consist in singing by a temperance choir, short addresses, mostly by the members, and singing the pledge. At every meeting, more or less singers are obtained ; for several weeks past from 20 to 30 at each meeting. The society now numbers over 1,100. Many of these were habitual drinkers, and not a few of the active members were confirmed drunkards. The Irish also have a Temperance Association called the "St. Joseph Temperance Society," which is efficient in its influence among this class of the people.

The whole village is thoroughly roused and penetrated to the very heart by the influence of these movements.

This Good Samaritan enterprise, in many parts of the State, is producing wonderful results. At Rockville, the movement commenced about a year ago, and now the society numbers over 1,100, who have signed the pledge. In New Britain the reformation is still more wonderful, the pledge having been signed by about 5,000, and in Hartford by between 4,000 and 5,000. God speed this good work through the State and land !

A. B.

Have you thought of the fact that in this land there are half a million of the rising generation learning to drink every year who never drank before? Half a million of the young, just stepping upon the threshold of life, buoyant with joy and hope, but falling into the habit of those around them? That they are at the counter learning to drink? And you know the result, what follows, not in all cases, but in many of them, from this sad habit.

What is doing to save them? What is doing to check the ravages of this monster? I am always filled with regret after such a meeting as this that no pledge is circulated and signed. I know the power there is in this pledge. I am not old, but I can realize its effect as I look back to the time when I was entering upon manhood, five-and-twenty years ago.

There were 250,000 who signed the pledge in Ohio in a single year, among them many heads of families who, thereafter, trained up their children in the paths of sobriety.

Never was there such a work known in this country as that of the Washingtonians. Lawyers, doctors, ministers, statesmen, editors, teachers, men and women, temperate men and inebriates, joined on the platform of the pledge. And it went on conquering. May God put into the heart of our people the same interest and the same sense of responsibility !

Daniel Webster was once asked what was the most important thought that ever occurred to his

mind. He placed his hands on his brow, paused, and then replied, "The most important thought that ever occurred to me is the sense of my individual responsibility to God and man." I need not continue. I know how poor the words are compared to the emotions of the heart that seeks voice in these words.

If I should add one more remark, I would call your attention to the remarkable testimony from Joliet last week; there are 1,020 people of the State of Illinois who, to atone to the law for its violation, are locked up and doomed to labor for the State, with their heads shaven and with degrading clothing on them. Of the 1,020 there were 950 who signed a petition to the Legislature of Illinois stating that intoxication brought them to their present unhappy condition, and they beg these representatives of the people to save, if possible, the rest of their citizens from their unhappy fate. It almost reminds me of what is in this Word, of Dives in torment wanting to have some messenger to go to his family and ask them to save themselves from the fate that had come to him.

Have you thought of the additional fact that, if there were 950 men in that one State of Illinois, voluntarily testifying that for their crimes they are suffering the terrible and shameful penalties of intoxication, there are at least 14,000 people to-day languishing far from wife and child and home, dishonored by the sentence of the law, in this Union of ours, for crimes to which they have been led

by the influence of drink? Would you realize the full aggregation of sorrow? Then go with me down to the individual home of the man who began life with wife and means and happiness, who has become a slave to this demon and wears his fetters on his limbs. Do you find happiness there? Do you find contentment there? Do you find prosperity? Ah! no. Do you find love and confidence? No, no. Does the wife's cheek light up with joy when her husband comes home as the shadows lengthen with each returning eve? On the contrary, her blood chills and her cheek pales at the step of him who pledged her a life of devotion for the loving heart she should give to him, and from whom she now fears the smiting blow or the bitter word.

My friends, I need not continue this. I leave it with you. All inspiration combines to give you fearful and impressive warning. From this very inspired Word, where God declares that no drunkard should enter the kingdom of heaven, there comes a voice from the Infinite lips saying to you and to me and to all: "Beware, beware!" In that land where the streets are gold, and the gates are pearl, and the walls are jasper and sapphire, the finger of God has written, "No drunkard shall enter here." No drunkard shall sit down in the kingdom of heaven. I know not why it is there. It may be because he has voluntarily debased the image of God in which he was created. It may be because he has given himself up to the temptation which leads one away from that which is

of good report, virtuous, and just. But whatever may be the reason, from that Book which never errs comes this warning to us, "Beware!" To you it says, "Beware!" To the moderate drinker it says, "Beware!" The man you met, this afternoon, reeling in his cups on the sidewalk—the man you have seen drinking at the counter of the lowest saloon, began just as you begin. Poor-houses and prisons say to you, "Beware!" They whose arms were nerve, and whose forms were grace, to-day, dead from intoxication, say to you, with their gloomy lesson, "Beware!" Homes once happy, now miserable: wives once joyous in the love of their husbands, now turned to hatred, while the caresses of the husband are turned to abuse, and competence to poverty, from the midst of their miseries and desolation warn you and exclaim "Beware!"

To your own hearts and consciences I leave the question to decide. In the language of an eminent champion of temperance, I might say, "If wine-drinking can be easily given up by you, give it up for your example on your fellow-men. If wine-drinking you find to be difficult to give up, give it up for your own sake.

Choose you this day whether you and yours will stand with us on the rock of safety, above the snares, and evil, and anguish, and misery, and woe, and desolation of the tempter: whether, defying the warnings that Nature and Inspiration combine to give, you will go down, down, after the first step (for it is always the first that costs), that easy

descent, until at last, wretched and dishonored, having lost the respect of others and your own self-respect, you end a miserable life by a home in a tomb, from which there is, if Inspiration be true, no resurrection that shall take you to a better land. Does not your hope for happiness, here and hereafter, give emphasis to that one word which embodies all I can say to you, which comes from God's own lips, "BEWARE"?

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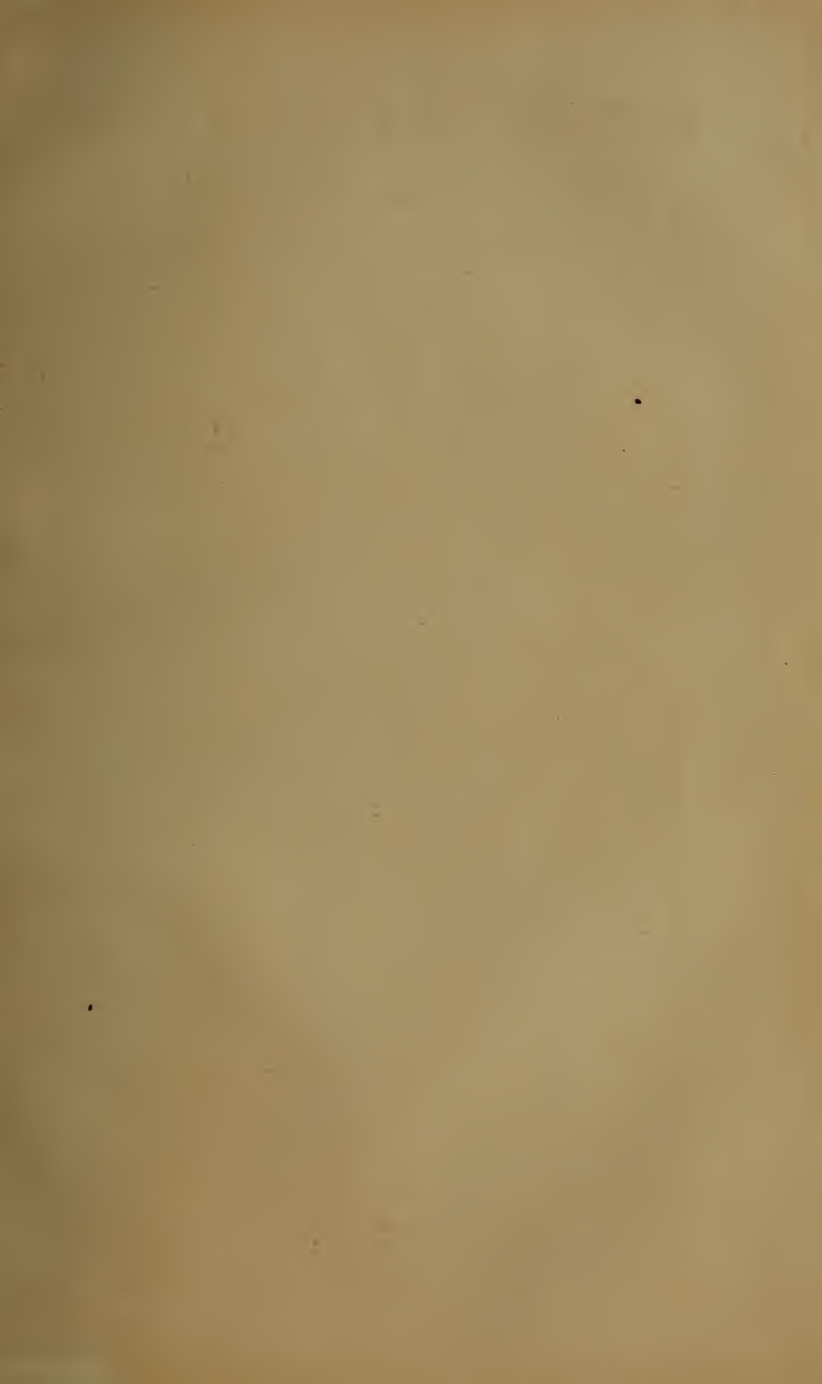
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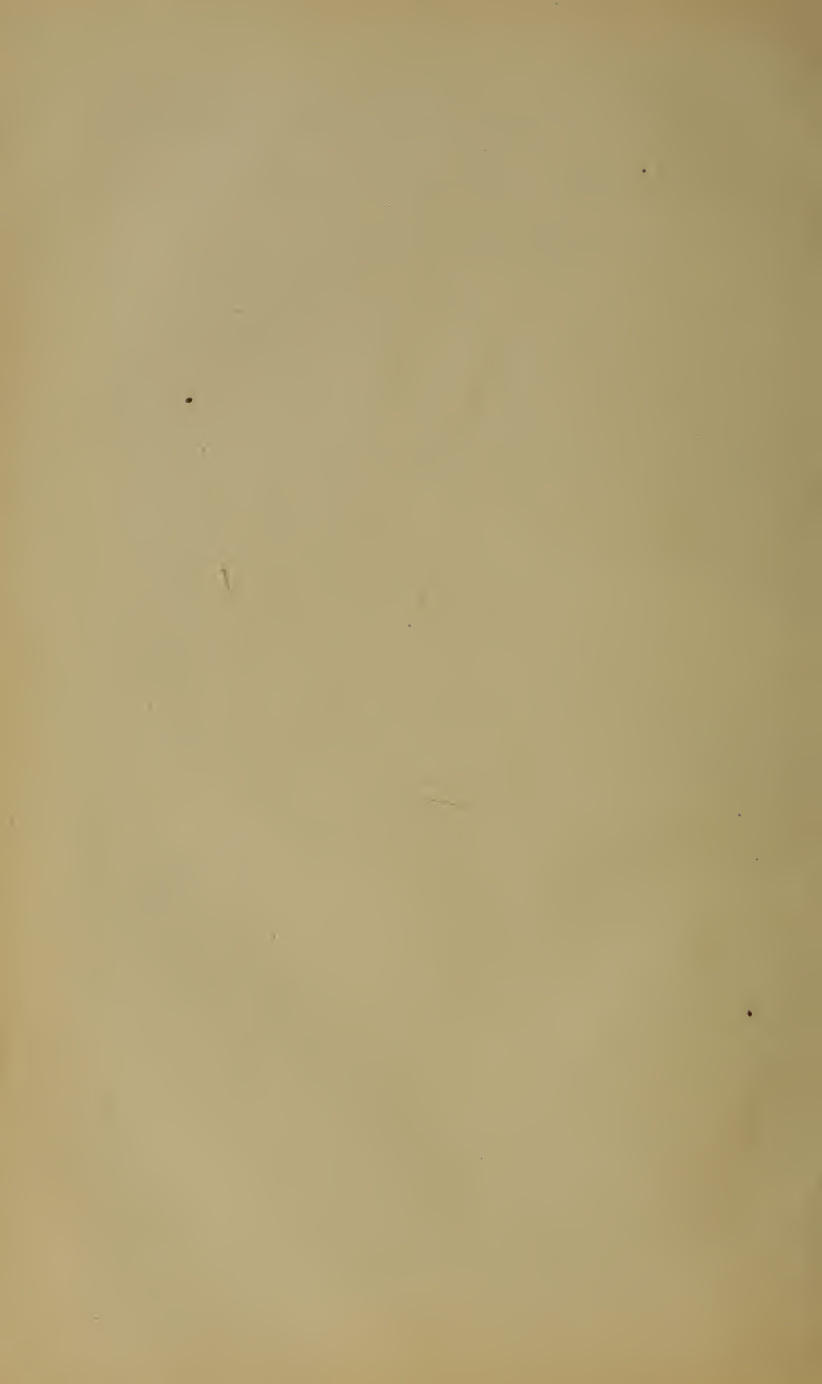
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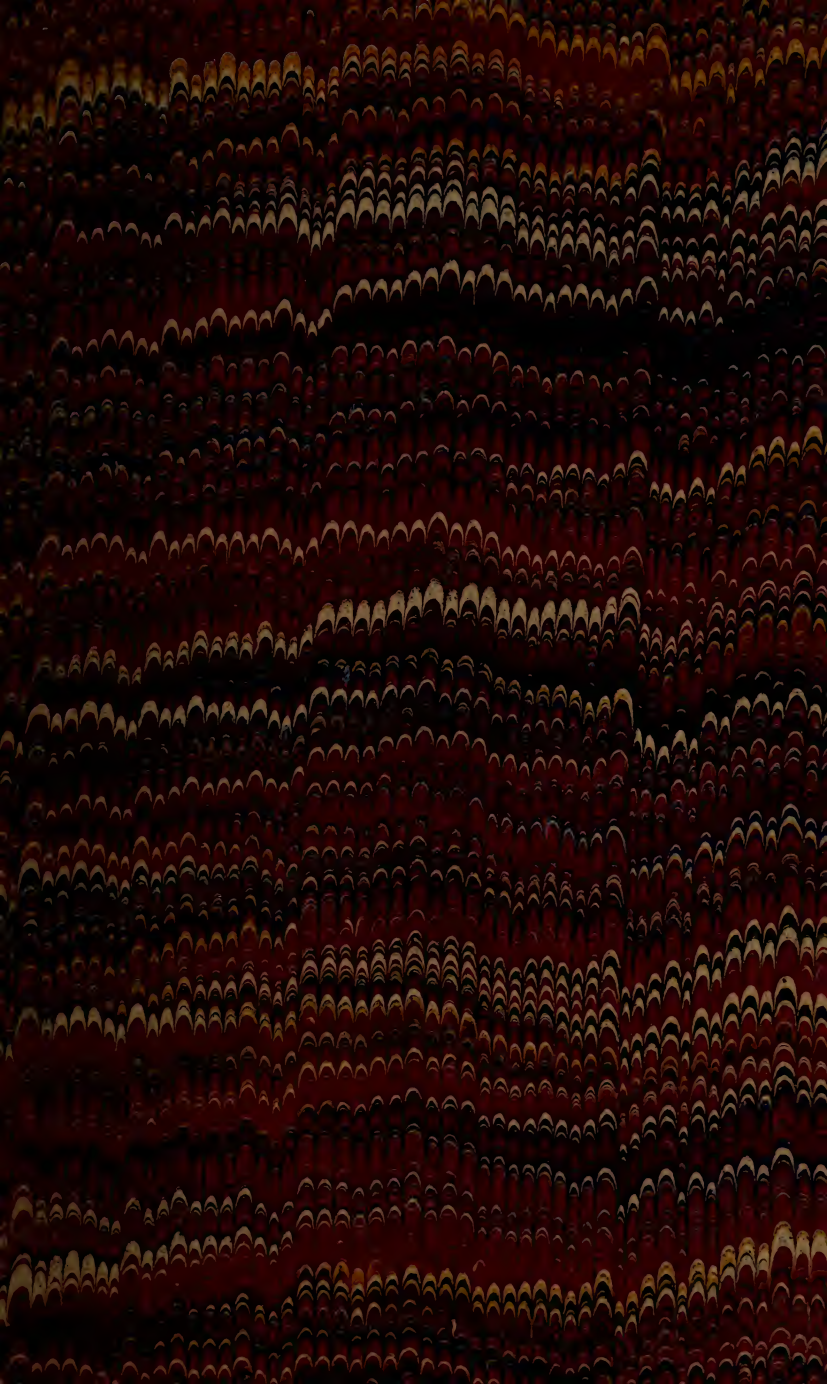
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